

MAG REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN Phase 1

Values, Goals and Objectives

Draft Task Report

*Mobility for the
New Millennium*

February 2003



**MARICOPA
ASSOCIATION of
GOVERNMENTS**

Regional Transportation Plan – Phase 1

VALUES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Prepared for:



Prepared by:



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PREFACE

This document is one of a series of reports and documents that have been prepared for the MAG Regional Transportation Plan – Phase 1 project. There are five published documents that were produced as final products of specific tasks. These five documents form the basis of the **Summary Report**. The five task reports are:

**Status of Regional Transportation
Values, Goals and Objectives
Alternative Growth Concepts
Analysis of Alternative Growth Concepts
Transportation Planning Principles**

In addition to the above documents, several other products from RTP Phase 1 are available in the project files. These products provide documentation of the major steps taken in the project and provide input to the five documents listed above and the final report.

❑ **Issue Papers:**

- Demographics and Social Change
 - New Economy
 - Environmental and Resource
 - Land Use and Urban Development
 - Transportation Modes and Technologies
- ❑ Five forums were held in February and March 2001 with presentations by nationally recognized experts in the five categories listed above under Issue Papers. **Videos** were made of most of the forums, and a presentation was prepared identifying the major themes of the forums.
- ❑ Sixteen focus group meetings were held in May and June 2001. The groups included various geographic, ethnic and agency orientations. A summary is provided in the **Focus Groups Results** task paper dated August 2001.
- ❑ Interviews were held with 21 resource and agency stakeholders throughout the metropolitan area. The findings from these interviews were documented in a task paper dated October 2001.
- ❑ The **Population Projections** task paper dated September 19, 2001, was prepared to provide the “horizon” projections to be used in the analyses for this RTP.
- ❑ A task paper entitled **Summary of Research and Transportation Model Adjustments for Vehicle Trip Reductions** dated March 27, 2002, was prepared to assist in determining potential traffic impacts of trip reduction actions.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (WITH SUPPORTING VALUES AND STRATEGIES)

Background

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is currently conducting a comprehensive planning effort to develop a new Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The plan is being developed in two phases. Phase I, which is nearing completion, has focused on assessing the key trends and issues that will affect future transportation in the MAG area. Phase II, which has recently been initiated, will identify multi-modal improvements needed to address future travel demand throughout the region.

One of the major tasks in Phase I was aimed at defining a set of values, goals and objectives. The results of this effort will provide the planning process with a basis for identifying options, evaluating alternatives and making decisions on future transportation investments. Clear values, goals and objectives are also vital elements in the process of developing long-term transportation policies and strategies.

The process for developing a set of values, goals, objectives and strategies involved seeking ideas and input from a variety of sources. These sources included the results of the five expert panel forums held in the region during February and March 2001, and the sixteen (16) focus group sessions held throughout the region in May and June 2001. Comments and information from these sessions were consolidated and documented to provide a record of the concerns and ideas expressed by the attendees. In addition, information was obtained from a historical document search, which focused on goals and objectives contained in member agency general plans or other planning documents. This information was augmented by the results of other RTP study tasks, input from staff and comments from the MAG Transportation Review Committee and MAG modal committees to produce the preliminary set of values, goals, objectives and strategies that is discussed below.

Values

Values are an organized and persistent set of preferences, which, consciously or not, influence the choices we make. Values are fundamental beliefs regarding what is important and what is not or what is desirable and what is not. Establishing a set of values allows planners and elected and appointed decision-makers to consider what people value and what their priorities are. Values are used, not only to shape plans, but also to motivate long-term commitment to those plans and their implementation. They are tools for inspiring achievement and unifying energies toward a future that is considerably more desirable than it would be without such thoughtful preparation. The values set the stage for development of goals, objectives and strategies.

A set of MAG regional values derived from input provided by the forums, focus groups and other research is provided below. These values correspond to ideas expressed in the context of regional development and transportation in the MAG region. The values reflect common ground for developing transportation goals, objectives and strategies.

REGIONAL VALUES

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the opportunity for everyone to improve their lives. <p>We believe that all individuals in our growing and diverse population should have access to educational, employment, shopping, medical/health, recreational and cultural activities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a strong growing economy. <p>We want a strong and growing economy that provides quality jobs, opportunities for personal growth and the ability to increase our standard of living.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the natural environment. <p>We care about protecting nature, maintaining a healthy environment, preserving the unique open spaces and the natural beauty of the region for future generations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• quality life-style options. <p>We want the region to develop in a way that offers a variety of safe, healthy and pleasant neighborhood and working environments, recreational and cultural amenities, as well as options for how we travel.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• effective and efficient use of public resources. <p>We want existing assets to be managed effectively and new investments made wisely, providing efficient services to the public.</p>

Goals

A goal is a general statement of purpose that represents a long-term desired state of affairs. It is generally measurable by qualitative means. The ideas expressed in the goals represent themes repeated often by participants at the forums and focus groups. By identifying broad goals that are both visionary and practical, and that respond to the values of the region, the focus of the planning process can be more readily communicated to the public. The goals, in turn, can be defined in greater detail by specifying multiple objectives for each goal. The goals are basically aimed at answering the question: How can transportation help support our values?

The following four major transportation goals for the region have been identified:

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION GOALS

GOAL # 1: MAINTENANCE & SAFETY – Transportation infrastructure that is well maintained and safe.
GOAL # 2: ACCESS & MOBILITY – Affordable transportation services that provide accessibility and mobility for everyone.
GOAL # 3: SUSTAINING THE ENVIRONMENT – Transportation improvements that help sustain our environment and quality of life.
GOAL #4: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PLANNING – Transportation decisions that result in effective and efficient use of public resources and strong public support.

Objectives and Strategies

An objective is very similar to a goal, as it represents a desired end state of affairs. However, an objective is an intermediate result that must be realized to reach a goal. The definition of an objective is usually more focused than that of a goal and is typically more subject to being measured. The objectives were

drawn from input received through the focus group process, document research and MAG committee review comments. These ideas were grouped to help answer the question: How can we achieve our transportation goals?

Following the identification of objectives, a set of strategies was prepared for each objective. A strategy is a particular method or procedure to be followed to achieve an objective. Strategies are more specific in approach than objectives and address more limited areas of concern. As used here, strategies are intended to address questions concerning: What steps should we be taking to achieve our transportation objectives?

Finally, regional transportation goals, objectives and strategies were organized into the comprehensive listing shown below. This table will provide the basis for identifying system performance measures and project evaluation criteria to help guide transportation investment decisions.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (with Supporting Strategies)

GOAL # 1: MAINTENANCE & SAFETY – Transportation infrastructure that is well maintained and safe.
<p>OBJECTIVE 1A: Provide for the continuing maintenance needs of transportation facilities and services in the region, eliminating maintenance backlogs.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize maintenance and operations needs, including litter control and landscape maintenance, as a specific component of the regional transportation planning and decision-making process. • Identify the continuing maintenance and operations needs, including backlogs, for transportation facilities and transit services as part of the regional planning process and incorporate into long range plans. • Utilize appropriate maintenance and operations management systems to identify optimal approaches to preserving the region's transportation infrastructure. • Ensure that the level of maintenance provided on State facilities in the region does not decline due to diversion of funding to other areas.
<p>OBJECTIVE 1B: Provide a safe and secure environment for the traveling public, addressing roadway hazards and incident response, pedestrian and bicycle safety and transit security.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce incident response and removal times to reduce ancillary crashes and traffic congestion. • Incorporate safety considerations into to the regional transportation and mobility planning and programming process for all modes of transportation and incorporate into long range plans. • Assess and sponsor new and innovative transportation and mobility safety measures and projects. • Identify high crash rate locations on the street and highway system and develop potential methods to reduce the crash rate. • Ensure actions to facilitate airport security at both commercial service and general aviation airports. • Conduct health impact assessments of transportation plans and programs.

GOAL # 2: ACCESS & MOBILITY – Affordable transportation services that provide accessibility and modal options for everyone.

OBJECTIVE 2A: Maintain an acceptable and reliable level of service on transportation and mobility systems serving the region, taking into account performance by mode and facility type.

Strategies:

- Identify and support transportation system management (TSM) strategies that enhance traffic flow and reduce intersection delay.
- Provide the infrastructure to support traveler information systems that can provide real-time crash, delay and alternative routing information so that travelers can make better decisions to avoid congestion or incidents.
- Identify and implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) in regional corridors to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.
- Identify and remedy bottlenecks on the highway system that cause unnecessary congestion and delay.
- Identify and develop projects to restore or maintain the continuity of the arterial street grid system where possible (including pedestrian amenities and infrastructure), including the continuity of through lane capacity.
- Increase transit service frequency levels and route coverage and to reduce out-of-vehicle travel times.
- Assess airport facility needs, taking into account airspace, land use compatibility, cost, ground access, and user convenience to develop a regional airport system plan and implementation program.
- Consider pedestrian and non-motorized vehicle usage efficiencies in the design of measures to improve traffic flow.

OBJECTIVE 2B: Provide residents of the region with access to jobs, shopping, educational, cultural and recreational opportunities and provide employers with reasonable access to the workforce in the region.

Strategies:

- Improve and expand the street system throughout the region to respond to growth in travel demand, through coordinated functional classification, design standards and project prioritization.
- Improve and expand the public transit system throughout the region to respond to growth in travel demand and provide a range of transportation options.
- Assess the need for new major regional highway and transit corridors, as well as capacity enhancements for existing regional facilities, and prepare implementation plans for right-of-way protection and facility development.
- Maintain a dialogue with the business community and economic development agencies, regarding employee transportation requirements and goods movement needs.
- Work closely with local planning and economic development agencies to balance planned and existing transportation infrastructure with future growth and economic development.
- Provide a range of housing in terms of types and affordability within commute-sheds of job centers to minimize cross-regional travel.

OBJECTIVE 2C: Maintain a reasonable and reliable travel time for moving freight into, through and within the region, as well as provide high-quality access between intercity freight transportation corridors and freight terminal locations, including intermodal facilities for air, rail and truck cargo.

Strategies:

- Assess the specific needs of goods movement and identify infrastructure improvements to provide for efficient movement of freight to, from and within the region.
- Develop airport infrastructure and ground access to airports, increasing capacity of air cargo facilities.
- Enhance partnerships between the private freight industry and public agencies to improve and maintain the region's integrated multi-modal freight network.
- Provide alternative routing around the metropolitan area for trucks that are moving through the area and do not have to stop.
- Support the development of effective and efficient intermodal freight centers at appropriate locations in the region.
- Help facilitate efficient movement of rail freight to, from and within the region.

OBJECTIVE 2D: Provide the people of the region with transportation modal options necessary to carry out their essential daily activities and support equitable access to the region's opportunities.

Strategies:

- Provide affordable, quality transit service that connects regional centers and provides access to neighborhoods and employment areas by expanding the bus and light rail systems to cover more area and provide 24-hour services along key routes.
- Establish a system of park-and-ride facilities that are integrated with express transit services, the regional light rail system and HOV lanes.
- Continue to plan for the expansion of the regional light rail system, including the supporting bus and park-and-ride lot facilities.
- Identify and support a regional system of pedestrian and bicycle facilities that provide access to local amenities, regional activity centers and major recreational areas, taking into account the importance of connectivity and safety.
- Implement High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on all regional freeway facilities to provide enhanced mobility for car pools, buses, and emergency vehicle response.
- Develop a demonstration project that tests the applicability of Express lanes that would allow single occupancy vehicles to use excess available capacity on the HOV system for a cost per mile of travel.

OBJECTIVE 2E: Address the mobility needs of the elderly and Title VI and Environmental Justice populations and avoid or mitigate adverse or disproportionately high impacts of transportation projects on these groups.

Strategies:

- Assess demographic trends and associated transportation and mobility implications, with particular attention on elderly mobility issues and the growing diversity in the population.
- Maintain a dialogue with transportation users, and potential users, to help identify system deficiencies and special user group needs, such as demand responsive service to target population groups and needs of pedestrians.

- Monitor technical advances in alternative modes and their potential application to specific needs of population groups.
- Apply universal access design principles in the development and improvement of transportation facilities and services.
- Identify the geographic distribution of Title VI / Environmental Justice population groups and assess the potential impact of proposed policies and projects.
- Conduct public involvement / outreach programs to solicit input from Title VI / Environmental Justice populations during the regional and corridor planning studies.
- Encourage the development of affordable housing in proximity to job centers to improve the job accessibility for Title VI population groups.

GOAL # 3: SUSTAINING THE ENVIRONMENT – Transportation improvements that help sustain our environment and quality of life.

OBJECTIVE 3A: Identify and encourage implementation of mitigation measures that will reduce noise, visual and traffic impacts of transportation projects on neighborhoods.

Strategies:

- Develop a list of “best practices” for impact mitigation for regional transportation projects including land use planning, noise mitigation measures, visual enhancement techniques and other methods to reduce neighborhood impacts.
- Strengthen land use planning around airports to avoid residential encroachment and to encourage compatible non-residential land uses.
- Identify future regional transportation corridors early and to ensure that these corridors are appropriately reflected on the land use plans of local jurisdictions and pursue measures to protect the corridors from encroachment and neighborhoods from impacts of future facilities.

OBJECTIVE 3B: Encourage programs, projects and land use planning that reduce the dependence on single occupant vehicles, reduce the number of trips per household, and reduce trip lengths.

Strategies:

- Identify and support transportation demand management (TDM) strategies that reduce dependence on single occupant vehicles and reduce travel through means such as telework, compressed work weeks, and other flex-time concepts.
- Apply transportation solutions utilizing options that reduce vehicle miles of travel, automobile trips and reduce vehicular emissions.
- Coordinate with local agencies during development of general plans to achieve an appropriate balance between jobs, housing and transportation facilities and support the development of neighborhoods where work, home, school and amenities are in close proximity.
- Concentrate growth near activity centers that provide a mixture of residential, commercial, entertainment, recreation, civic and cultural uses, thus resulting in multi-purpose trips, shorter trips, and trips that can utilize alternative modes, including walking.
- Encourage new developments that are located and designed to enhance the pedestrian accessibility of the surrounding area and encourage alternative modes of transportation.
- Consider new legislation, regional impact fees or other mechanisms that address regional land use and transportation issues such as infrastructure capacity, mitigation and design standards.
- Identify and support incentives for infill development and encourage redevelopment and revitalization in higher density urban cores.

- Encourage the development of telecommunications infrastructure to reduce the number of trips taken, particularly single occupant vehicle trips.

OBJECTIVE 3C: Make transportation decisions that are compatible with air-quality conformity and water-quality objectives, the sustainable preservation of key regional ecosystems and a high quality of life.

Strategies:

- Test transportation projects, plans and programs for conformity with air quality standards.
- Conduct appropriate environmental assessments of proposed transportation projects to identify potential impacts and mitigation strategies.
- Avoid inappropriate transportation facility development in areas that contain sensitive natural resources, environmental hazards, water features, watercourses, and scenic/recreational sites.
- Pursue transportation solutions using alternative energy sources that reduce the need for oil, reduce air pollution and increase cost efficiency.
- Coordinate the maintenance, enhancement and development of existing and new scenic corridors with state and local agencies, and the development community.
- Facilitate transportation access to regional parks, open space, and recreation destinations.

GOAL #4: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PLANNING – Transportation decisions that result in effective and efficient use of public resources and strong public support.

OBJECTIVE 4A: Make transportation investment decisions that use public resources effectively and efficiently, using performance-based planning.

Strategies:

- Develop regional policies, strategies and performance measures for identifying transportation needs, prioritizing improvements, implementing projects and monitoring and evaluating investments.
- Produce an annual report that describes the status of the implementation of Regional Transportation Plan including material changes in scope, budget or schedule of major transportation projects.
- Periodically assess the performance of the regional transportation system using the objectives and performance measures identified in the Regional Transportation Plan and make any changes to the plan to better meet the plan objectives.
- Periodically assess the regional growth outlook and other assumptions, including technology, underlying the plan and make changes to the Regional Transportation Plan to reflect the latest information.
- Evaluate promising transportation and information technologies that serve to interconnect systems, improve safety, reduce the need for travel and facilitate traffic flow.

OBJECTIVE 4B: Establish a dedicated revenue source that provides consistent funding for regional transportation and mobility needs.

Strategies:

- Coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies to identify funding mechanisms to improve, construct, operate and maintain all modes of transportation.

- Support and seek voter approval for regional dedicated revenue for new and existing regional transportation corridors and improvements to street networks, public transit services and pedestrian facilities.
- Encourage the use of developer-funded strategies to finance growth-related transportation capacity needs.

OBJECTIVE 4C: Achieve broad public support for needed investments in transportation infrastructure and resources for continuing operations of transportation and mobility services.

Strategies:

- Communicate with the public to educate people on the transportation planning process and the rationale for regional transportation decisions.
- Foster a variety of citizen involvement activities with the public to solicit broad participation, input and debate on proposed transportation plans and implementation proposals.
- Communicate directly with local communities, affected neighborhoods and employers to help ensure that decisions are responsive to local community needs.